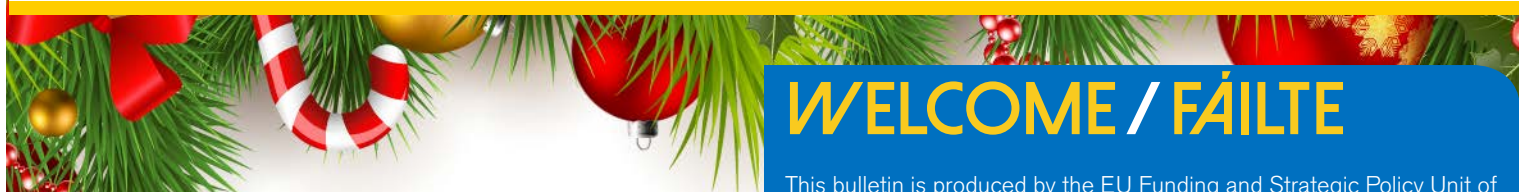




**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council**

ISSUE 8 DECEMBER 2015

EU UNIT UPDATE



WELCOME / FAILTE

This bulletin is produced by the EU Funding and Strategic Policy Unit of Donegal County Council. The EU Unit works with all services of Donegal County Council to proactively target external funding opportunities, influence policy and identify EU networks of benefit to the Council. The Strategic Policy Unit promotes and support inter-agency networking and partnership across the wider north west region through a range of collaborative structures and projects. This bulletin will provide you with all the latest news in relation to Donegal County Councils involvement in this important area of work.

Liam Ward, Director of Services, Donegal County Council

WHATS INSIDE...

- ▶ **EU Unit News**..... 2
- ▶ **Funding and Projects**..... 5
- ▶ **Networks and Collaboration**..... 8
- ▶ **Policy Work**..... 12
- ▶ **North West Updates**..... 14

SPACEial North West

Putting data at the heart of decision making

'SPACEial' project wins prestigious Chambers Ireland Award

SPACEial North West picked up a prestigious Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Award at the Chambers Ireland Annual Excellence in Local Government Awards ceremony in Dublin in November 2015. This, the 12th annual awards ceremony, recognises and celebrates the best of Local Government. SPACEial NorthWest is a cross border project with Donegal County Council being the lead implementing council, working closely with the Derry City and Strabane District Council, Limavady Borough Council and Magherafelt District Council in responding to the need for cross border data to inform and shape policies and decisions within the entire region. Chambers Irelands Excellence in Local Government Awards showcase best practice in local government, highlighting some of the great projects that local authorities are undertaking. The Awards are judged by a panel of expert judges working in the field of Local Government and have been taking place since 2004.

The SPACEial North West project has won first place in the Joint Local Authority Initiatives category.

The project has worked with key stakeholders providing them with the combination of spatial datasets which are most relevant to their needs and provides them with the technical skills to enable them to use this data to develop policies, plans and strategies for the enhancement of the entire region.

The project produced a dedicated website, www.spaceialnw.eu which is essentially a one stop shop for Maps, Stats and Apps in the North West Region Cross Border. Congratulating the project team Seamus Neely, Chief Executive of Donegal County Council said the SPACEial project was all about placing data at the heart of decision making. "It provides both public sector and non public sector agencies with 159 cross-border spatial datasets to help inform their



The Donegal project team with Mr. Ian Talbot, Chief Executive, Chambers Ireland (left) and the Minister Alan Kelly T.D

plans and policies and equips them with the necessary skills to use different GIS technologies to make best use of the data available." He added: "This project has provided a much needed platform in the North West Region in using geographical information to develop plans and policies and has the potential to impact on the lives of 317,518 people who live in this cross-border region".

For more information please contact Research & Policy Unit : 0749153900.

APPLY SKILLS AND CONSERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT WITH NEW TOOLS (ASCENT) PROJECT



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020

The EU Unit of Donegal County Council assisted in the submission of the ASCENT Project to the Northern Periphery & Arctic 2014-2020 Programme under Priority Axis 4 - Natural and Cultural Heritage; Specific Objective 4 - Increased capacity of remote and sparsely populated communities for sustainable environmental management. The application was submitted on 27th November 2015.

If successfully funded, the ASCENT project will bring together Local and Environmental Authorities to collectively address the environmental challenges facing the conservation and enhancement of Areas of Natural beauty in the partner regions: Iceland - Geosite Eldhraun (e. Laki lava field) (Skaftárhreppur) Úlfarsfell Mountain (Reykjavík and Mosfellsbaer municipalities); Slieve Donard (Eastern Mourne Mountains), Slieve Gullion and Ring Dyke (Northern Ireland); Mount Errigail, Derryveagh Mountain, (Donegal Ireland); Hossa region (Finland) and The Hardanger Mountain Plateau (Norway).

Due to unregulated access to sites and natural erosion these regions are experiencing degradation, loss of unique bio-diversity and bio-resources.

The ASCENT project will develop management plans across the programme area to assist Local Authorities and other stakeholders to monitor these sites and implement innovative measures to ensure their economic and environmental sustainability. The project will look at how to use and manage the mountains and upland areas responsibly, will examine new ways to deal with the sites, learn from other regions using a teacher: learner principle, examine habitat damage and habitat restoration, and introduce appropriate site specific mitigation measures. The project will create living laboratory situations whereby management techniques can be implemented and skills gained locally on learning from other regions. It will seek to explore new concepts for balancing tourism, cultural and economic interests with environmental needs. The project will disseminate and generate knowledge on the impacts on the environment, local biodiversity resources and promote civic pride among communities of their environmental resources, and unique local cultural heritage. Project outputs include learning, exchange of ideas and measures to arrest the decline and degradation of Natura 2000 sites and other sites (SACs) caused by unregulated / unrestricted access to mountains.

For further information please contact, Roisin McBride - rmcbride@donegalcoco.ie



Cool Route Delegates Meeting

The Cool Route project seeks to develop a unique sailing route from Cork to Norway. Donegal County Council is a main partner in the project, which is led by Cork Institute of Technology. Cool Route delegates recently met in Donegal Town from 27th until 28th October 2015. This visit to Donegal included a partner meeting and also a stakeholder workshop to engage local communities and tourism providers. Each partner was required to present an update on their individual project work packages. Donegal County Council/ Donegal Tourism Ltd representative Joy Harron presented an update on work package 2 – communications and dissemination of information for the Cool Route project. A stakeholder workshop was held on day 2 with local tourism businesses, sailing clubs etc. invited to attend. The workshop was very positive and it was important to engage with and get feedback from local stakeholders. The next meeting is due to take place in Glasgow in April 2016.



Cool Route Projects Partners from Ireland Northern Ireland and Scotland pose for photo during Donegal meeting

LADDER

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AS DRIVERS FOR DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

The Ladder project stands for Local Authorities as drivers for development education and awareness raising, otherwise known as (DEAR). DEAR is an EU Programme that aims to inform

EU citizens about development issues, mobilise greater public support for actions against poverty, give citizens tools to engage critically with global development issues, to foster new ideas and ultimately to change attitudes. Following on from the successful European Level training that took place in Donegal in July 2015, two members of Donegal County Council attended the European Level Training in Athens, Greece from the 5th to the 07th November this year. This training which saw participation from twenty European countries, from Italy to Israel gave participants an opportunity

to network, providing them with a deeper knowledge of the project including the development of the Local Level Training that will form part of the project locally commencing in 2015 and concluding in 2016. The training on offer will provide participants with an opportunity to develop their understanding of and be enthusiastic about DEAR having the ability to link global issues to local realities. If you are interested in attending the training or wish to find out more about the project, please contact Joanne on jkilmart@donegalcoco.ie or visit the Council's website @ www.donegalcoco.ie





Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020

Smarter Energy Communities in Northern and Arctic regions. SECURE Project

Project 'SECURE' was submitted to the Northern Periphery & Arctic Interreg VB programme on 27th November 2015. The project was led by Ernact – 'European Regions network for the application of Communications Technology' with project partners Donegal County Council, Leitrim County Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, and transnational partners from Finland, Sweden, Faroe Islands and Newfoundland. SECURE is an acronym for 'Smarter Energy Communities in Northern and Arctic Regions.' Lodged to Priority Axis 3 – 'Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy' and to Specific Objective 3 –

'Increased use of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions in housing and public infrastructures in remote, sparsely populated areas.'

The project aim is to transfer and implement innovative energy solutions for housing and public infrastructure across the Northern periphery and arctic regions with different maturity-levels throughout these regions. Knowledge transfer will be demand-led, supported by a quadruple helix approach, and impact will be maximised by focusing implementation in small smart energy communities and building up local authority capacity. The main **objective** is to use transnational cooperation between higher and lower maturity regions to increase awareness of the technologies (including ICTs) and solutions for energy efficiency and renewables. The main **change** (result) will be increased energy awareness in communities and local authorities, evidenced by the following **outputs**: 5

Smarter Energy Communities, 15 energy solutions applied which retrofit 24 houses, increase efficiency by 5% in 3 buildings and install alternative energy sources in 3 public infrastructures. The **approach** is novel because it packages solutions from energy higher maturity regions as services for delivery to other parts of the NPA, promotes sustainability by building up local authority expertise, concentrates initial effort in small communities to increase impact, and brings all stakeholder together using a quadruple-helix approach. The entire project budget is €1.5m and DCC will hold a budget of €255,000. The project will now undergo an admissibility check and then an eligibility check by the programme secretariat and if deemed eligible, it will then undergo a quality assessment with final decision by the end of February 2016. For more information please contact Roisin Kelly: rkelly@donegalcoco.ie



WILDSEA Europe Meeting

A meeting of the WILDSEA Europe project delegates took place from the 8th until the 9th of October in the Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny. Delegates from Spain, Italy, Croatia, Northern Ireland and Donegal were in attendance and were delighted with the opportunity to visit Donegal, some for the first time. The meeting coincided with the Donegal Tourism Ltd 'Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way Tourism Conference'. Project delegates had the opportunity to network with local project stakeholders at the conference and meet tourism providers who were very interested in participating in the project. Project delegates were also given a tour of the county including Malin Head with the guidance of Emmett Johnston from National Parks and Wildlife. Opportunities to develop Malin Head as a world class marine national park were discussed. A list of 15 stakeholders/tourism businesses has been compiled and these businesses will be contacted in due course to engage them with the project.



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

WaterPro Project

The 3rd call for Priority 3 and 4 of the NPA programme closed on 30th November 2015. Donegal County Council is leading on project WaterPro under priority 4 – protecting the WaterPro Project under Priority 4 - Protecting, Promoting and Developing Cultural and Natural

Heritage, with the specific objective to increase capacity of remote and sparsely populated communities for sustainable environmental management.

The Northern Runoffs into Profits or WaterPro project will collect dispersed knowledge and expertise in runoff management into a well-structured Guidance and Tool kit, especially tailored for sparsely populated NPA areas currently facing water pollution issues and future harsh effects of climate change. Historically, different regions have developed their specific methods

for managing runoffs, but well-structured and comparable data for eco-efficient and profound decision-making is missing. WaterPro aims to bridge this gap. The project will now undergo an admissibility check followed by an eligibility check by the programme secretariat and if deemed eligible, it will then undergo a quality assessment with a final decision in February 2016.

For further information contact:
EU unit Donegal County Council
Tel : 074 9153900

SPACEial Project Award



Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach and at the Department of Foreign Affairs with special responsibility for the Irish abroad Jimmy Deenihan TD(right) with Chief Executive, Seamus Neely and the winner of the Esri Ireland's 'Maps Make Sense for Salzburg' annual Map Challenge 2015 Rosita Mahony, Donegal County Council.

Showing exceptional innovation to educate and stimulate

The overall winner of the Esri Ireland's 'Maps Make Sense for Salzburg' annual Map Challenge 2015 has gone to Rosita Mahony, GIS and Research Officer with the SPACEial NW Project for the Donegal County Council's Diaspora Project 'Ireland's Call – to return its Global Diaspora Home'. Rosita is based at the Public Services Centre in Letterkenny.

The project was recently presented to the Minister of the Diaspora Mr Jimmy Deenihan at the annual Tip O'Neill Irish Diaspora Award ceremony in Buncrana. He highlighted the potential via mapping technology, to globally reach out to the Irish Diaspora Community abroad.

Rosita's idea for the map was inspired by her experience while working in the Research and Policy Unit of Donegal County Council, under the guidance of Loretta McNicholas, and receiving requests from agencies, related to the recession and the implications that it has on emigration. The development of the story map involved considerable research around the Irish Diaspora community and the hard economic facts and statistics to understand why they had to leave.

For more information please contact Rosita Mahony at 0749153900.
- See more at: <http://www.donegalcoco.ie/yourcouncil/communications>

FUNDING AND PROJECTS

Interreg



Northern Ireland - Ireland - Scotland
European Regional Development Fund

INTERREG VA

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

SEUPB have opened a call for applications for the development of cross-border Greenways and cycle networks to reduce car journeys in cross border transportation. Including strategic planning of cross-border routes utilised by commuters, addressing access issues,

meeting environmental and heritage requirements, route design, planning, construction, signage, promotion monitoring and evaluation. Donegal County Council through the Donegal Trails Office, is working in partnership with Derry and Strabane District Council to put in an application for a cross-border greenway development. €14 million ERDF is available under this call. The maximum intervention rate that can be applied is 85%. This means that applicants are required to bring a minimum of up to 15% match funding to the eligible

project costs over the lifetime of the project. Investments will be focussed on those parts of the network which demonstrate the greatest capacity to impact on carbon emissions by bringing about a shift in transport patterns. The closing date for the submission of applications is January 29th 2016

For further information contact:
Francis Conaghan - fconaghan@donegaltrailsoffice.com



CREATE PROJECT

The CREATE project held its Final Conference in Nièvre (France) on 23rd September. CREATE (Connecting Rural Enterprise for a Transnational Economy) is an INTERREG IVB NWE funded project that aims to transform small rural businesses across North West Europe using high speed broadband and advanced ICT. ERNACT held a number of workshops throughout County Donegal, Derry City and Strabane to inform local SMEs about the benefits of conducting business online. These workshops were funded through CREATE. See www.create-nwe.eu or facebook.com/CreateNWE for more information.



PROJECT FUNDING UPDATE



INTERREG Europe

ERNACT submitted two project applications to the recent INTERREG Europe funding call. One was submitted to the Low-Carbon Economy priority and one to Research and Innovation. ERNACT are also a partner in a further application submitted to Research and Innovation. The total value of these applications amounts to €5.3 million. All three projects have passed a technical assessment and successful applicants will be notified in January 2016.



NPA (Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme)

ERNACT submitted a €1.8 million funding application to Priority Axis 3 which closed on 30th November 2015. This priority has the specific objective of increasing the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions in housing and public infrastructures. Project decisions will be made by the NPA Monitoring Committee on 24th February 2016.



North West Europe Programme

ERNACT were one of nineteen organisations who were successful in Step 1 of the recent INTERREG VB North West Europe funding call. As a result, ERNACT were invited to enter Step 2 and have submitted an application in mid-December valued at €2.9 million. Successful project applicants will be notified at the end of February 2016.

Please follow ERNACT at facebook.com/ERNACT or twitter.com/ERNACT to receive our latest updates.



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

IMPROVE PROJECT

The IMPOVE project held its Launch Conference on 10th November 2015 in Bifrost (Iceland). IMPROVE is led by ERNACT and funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA). Donegal County Council and Derry City & Strabane District Council participate as project partners. IMPROVE aims to increase the level of innovation in six NPA regions (including County Donegal) in the field of technology-driven public

services. The project is currently documenting and sharing good practices from partner regions. This will form the basis for a common methodology to guide the development of innovative public services. Please follow us at facebook.com/ImproveNPA to receive the latest updates.



European Union

European Regional Development Fund



NEA3 - CAPITEN 2020

This is a nautical and marine leisure industry based project lead by the Regional Council of Brittany with Donegal County Council as a project partner. Through its participation in this project, Donegal County Council will develop transnational networks and partnerships of benefit, which will seek to exploit the economic opportunities of the sector, put in place sustainable solutions and promote job creation in our regions. Following the circulation of the strategic implementation plan, all project partners have submitted their Specific Action document outlining the numerous local and regional initiatives they are planning. As part of the project development, a collaborative work platform has been launched on the web portal of Brittany.

This tool will centralise partner contributions and project preparation documents with a conversation space to allow partners express their views on project themes. To endorse the overall action plan, Donegal County Council attended a technical working session in Paris on December 11th. The purpose of the meeting was to help finalise the bid which will be presented at the first call for applications for the Atlantic Area Programme in June 2016.

For further information contact: EU Unit Donegal County Council, 074 9153900.



European Union

European Regional Development Fund
Investing in your future



River Restoration Project

Donegal County Council is lead partner in a bid for funding under the Environment measure of Interreg VA cross border programme, specific objective 2.4 : To improve freshwater quality in cross-border river basins. As Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland share three International river

basins a coordinated, cross-border approach to the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive is needed.

The River Restoration project has identified actions that go above and beyond those that agencies already have a statutory obligation to undertake and will address the core challenge of restoring water-bodies in border area catchments by increasing catchment resilience (biophysical, social and economic) and developing stakeholder capacity (community, government and NGOs) taking into consideration both surface and groundwater.

A stage 1 application is anticipated to be lodged by the close of the call which is 8th January 2016.

For further information contact: EU unit Donegal County Council Tel : 074 9153900



European Union

European Regional Development Fund

Trail Gazers

The EU Unit of Donegal County Council is currently working with the Research Unit of Donegal County Council to identify funding opportunities for the proposed Trail Gazers Project. The Trail Gazers Project aims to transfer learning, technology and experience from the SPACeialNW project while at the same time working with interested parties in developing an online 'Trail Gazers Application'. The idea behind the project is to allow tourist visitors to Atlantic regions advance viewing of places of natural beauty across the Atlantic area using virtual tours. At a broader level the project will endeavour to increase visitor numbers to rural Atlantic regions and share experiences with Tourism Agencies and Local and Regional Authorities on technology deployment and the mapping of recreational routes using technology. This application will allow visitors to take a virtual tour of different walking and recreational trails throughout the

regions. It will allow potential visitors to see in advance the natural and build environment along each trail, the tourist and visitor attractions, restaurants, pubs, shops, businesses etc.

The project seeks to action data capture and comparability across different jurisdictions, work with interested partner countries to identify the existing, planned and potential recreational walking routes across the region and explore with interested partner countries the best approach to using technology as a promotional tool. The project seeks to work in partnership with tourism providers in interested partner countries to identify approved accommodation and attractions within close proximity to a route. To enhance the visitors (walkers, cyclists and outdoor pursuits) experience of everything Donegal recreational routes has to offer, while at the same time promoting and developing the counties natural and cultural heritage to a world wide audience. The project is being developed with the Interreg VB Atlantic Area programme which is due to open in early 2016.

For further information contact Ms. Roisin Mc Bride EU Unit rmcbride@donegalcoco.ie



Tides of Time

The Tides of Time project is now in further development phase with work packages being expanded and developed to suit a number of themes. The Atlantic Area Programme to which the project will be submitted was finalised in November 2015 now providing the necessary information for the further final project development.

The EU Unit are continuing to receive expressions of interest from potential partners including interest amongst partners of the Sail West project. From early December 2015 potential partners

will be contacted individually to determine their own individual interests and expectations. It is likely that the consortium will be comprised of a lead partner Donegal County Council, full partners from the various EU countries and a number of associate partners. The aims of the Tides of Time project are:

- Revitalisation of Coastal communities by providing a new means of stimulating economic and social improvement and job creation through tourism and education.
- Promote transnational co-operation and create a co-operative network of partners building relationships and understanding of maritime historic events in each region.

- Research, identify, restore and conserve sites of maritime heritage, archaeological and historical significance with particular reference to maritime conflicts through the years. This is of particular significance as the Great War Centenary takes place between 2014 – 2018.
- Develop a maritime heritage trail linking heritage sites, underwater attractions and coastal sites with historical and archaeological value and deploy a marketing campaign and reduce tourism seasonality by providing a wide range of activities.

It is anticipated that with further partnership finalisation and collaboration early in the year the application will be submitted to the first call in quarter 2 2016. For further information contact: EU unit Donegal County Council Tel.: 074 9153900

NETWORKS AND COLLABORATION



NUI Galway National Event of the Atlantic Action Plan

Implementing the Atlantic Action Plan & Measuring the Ocean Economy Conference

Donegal county Council were invited to present at the "Implementing the Atlantic Action Plan & Measuring the Ocean Economy" Conference in Galway on November 24th. The event was organised by the support team for the Atlantic Action Plan in association with the Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit (SEMURU).

The EU unit attended and participated in the event which provided participants with an update of a wide range of topics related to the marine sector in Ireland and the Atlantic Area, as well as creating discussion on the opportunities available to Irish stakeholders.

The event hosted two parallel sessions and showcased current socio-economic marine research and funding opportunities. Sessions focused on the INTERREG Atlantic Area and the Ireland Wales programme and facilitated the use of these programmes in implementing the Atlantic Action Plan.

Presentations from both the national contact points of these programmes as well as input from stakeholders involved in these programmes created a lively discussion on the opportunities available, how people are looking to avail of these with the ultimate aim of generating potential project ideas to bring forward in the future. The joint presentation by the EU unit and Donegal Tourism covered the units role within DCC, EU networks and collaboration work, Marine Tourism Objectives, Previous EU projects, and projects for the upcoming Atlantic Area programme planning 2014-2020 – Tides of Time, Trail Gazers and NEA3.

For further information contact: EU Unit Donegal County Council, 074 9153900

Cross border cooperation Group



Buckinghamshire County Council – North West Europe Interreg VB bid proposal.

Buckinghamshire County Council released an expression of interest to those interested in joining them in preparing a bid under the Interreg VB North West Europe programme to facilitate the implementation of low- carbon, energy and climate protection strategies to reduce GHG emissions in the North West Europe region and under priority objectives: SO₂/SO₃.

A meeting was held with their representative in mid September to determine if there would be any interest within this local authority to become involved in this bid proposal. The initial project discussion, scoping and outputs are:

- Potential installation of a pilot district heating solution or testing of new emerging solutions to assist with addressing fuel poverty.
- To create tools and networks to share knowledge and outputs arising from data created within the project.
- To create a network of stakeholders across North West Europe which would allow a knowledge exchange on best practice and successful models for implication of district heating solutions.

Donegal County Council found this opportunity interesting and will consider the potential project and the options further before the opening of the next call of the North West Europe programme.

Donegal County Councils EU unit were invited to sit on a Cross Border Cooperation Group comprising of representatives from Inishowen Development partnership, RAPID, Donegal Local Development Company, Uduas, and Derry City and Strabane District Council. IDP has brought this cross border grouping together to initiate and discuss the future for the region in relation to the Rural development programme and possible collaborative EU funding projects.

Reference is strongly made to the EU unit resourcing available within both Donegal County Council and Derry & Strabane District council. Both units utilise regional and European funding and the opportunity to harness this further through collaboration of the respective organisations.

Donegal County councils EU unit role is in identifying and utilising the EU funding programmes that best align with the councils ambitions and objectives on a project led basis. This ensures that the programme works for and in the interests of the organisation which in turn benefit the local community, county and region. To date this grouping have met 4 times since June 2015 and the intention is to continue to do so into 2016 with a view to optimising and availing of all possible funding opportunities.

For more information contact Roisin Kelly : rkelly@donegalcoco.ie

Research & innovation Priority - Interreg VA Territorial Co-Operation programme.

SEUPB in October 2015 released final detailed information relating to the Interreg VA cross border territorial co-operation programme 2014-2020. This information has been modified since previous correspondence resulting in the need to rediscuss with partners and to re-scope having regard to the new opportunities this programme now presents. This meeting was held in November and during which the Research & innovation - Renewable energy priority was discussed in the context of the development of Killybegs as a centre of marine renewable excellence. SEUPB has set out the priorities and their respective objective, actions and outputs.



The research & Innovation priority objective seeks to increase business industry-relevant Research & Innovation capacity across the region within two specific target sectors; 'Health & Life Sciences' and 'Renewable Energy'. It will result in an increase in the annual number of peer reviewed journal and conference publications within these two sectors, with cross-border authorship and with the potential to create economic impact.

This presents a new opportunity for an academia lead cross border project in Donegal and in NI and work is currently continuing in exploring this further.

For more information please contact : rkelly@donegalcoco.ie

Serbian Secretary of State visit to Donegal County Council

In October 2015 the EU unit was contacted by the Institute of public administration in Dublin to arrange a meeting with a visiting State Secretary from Serbia. A small team from the Community & Enterprise directorate comprising: Divisional manager Paddy Doherty, EU unit reps Roisin Kelly & Roisin mc Bride and from the Peace team, Anne McElchar met with Mr Milovan Filimonovic on 5th November.

Mr Filimonovic is the State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance based in Belgrade and during a previous visit had visited Donegal where he met with a DCC official and he wished to reconnect and develop this contact again to learn more of the workings of both the EU unit and of DCC Peace programme secretariat. During the

meeting he expressed his strong belief that the region of Topica in Serbia and Donegal shared commonality in having evolved under similar geographical, historical, socio-economic circumstances and conditions.

He was extremely interested in learning more and obtaining information on the evolution, preparation and implementation of the first two PEACE Programs and establishing a contact with the Managing Authority who have responsibility for implementing the programs to ascertain if such a model could be applied in the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina.

The meeting was hugely interesting for both parties, extremely hospitable and greatly appreciated by Mr Filimonovic. As a next step he is keen to establish stronger links between Donegal and the Topica region of Serbia and he hopes to initiate contact further with Donegal County Council.



During the visit Mr Filimonovic met with ERNACT – European regions network in the application of Communication technology who have a Serbian region as a member. This provided an additional link and area for the Serbian official to further explore and he was extremely delighted to have had the opportunity to briefly meet with Caitriona Strain and Marion Boyce of ERNACT.

For more information please contact Roisin Kelly: rkelly@donegalcoco.ie



Connecting cities Building successes

A cross sector representation from Donegal County Council, Health Service executive and Inishowen Development Partnership attended a workshop on the new URBACT III programme. The workshop was delivered by the national contact point for the programme, Ms Caroline Creamer who is based in NUI Maynooth. This programme aims to foster sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe. It is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy, co-financed by the European

Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by Member & Partner States. Currently the programme is open for expressions of interest on Action Planning networks and the programme also works with capacity building and capitalisation dissemination. The programme has 4 main aims:

- To improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.
- To improve the design of integrated urban & sustainable strategies/ action plans in cities.

- To improve the implementation of integrated urban & sustainable strategies/ action plans in cities
- To ensure that practitioners and decision makers at all levels have access to knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development.

Whilst URBACT is not an investment programme it does however finance transnational exchange and learning networks for cities. The term cities is loosely defined which provides scope for smaller urban locations. Budget per partner is typically **€600,000 -€750,000 and match funding from aptners depending on the status of counties being less developed & Transition: 85% ERDF and more developed: 70% ERDF.**

For more information please contact : rkelly@donegalcoco.ie



CONNECTING THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY TOURISM CONFERENCE

The collective marketing of Donegal and a positive attitude in presenting this to the world wide tourism market is crucial if we are to continue to benefit from the growth of the Wild Atlantic Way. That was the message from Donegal County Council's Chief Executive and Chairman of Donegal Tourism, Ltd, Seamus Neely when he addressed the second annual 'Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way' tourism conference which was held in the Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny in October.

Donegal County Councillors Bernard McGuinness, Martin McDermott, Nicholas Crossan, Rena Donaghey and Paul Canning with Cathaoirleach Cllr Ciaran Brogan and Mayor of the Letterkenny Municipal District, Cllr Gerry McMonagle with Barney McLaughlin and Paddy Doherty from the Council's Community and Enterprise section with Chief Executive of Donegal County Council, Seamus Neely at the second annual 'Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way' tourism conference

The theme this year, 'Your Business, Developing Networks, Reaching Customers' attracted a huge attendance from all over the county and beyond.

Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council, Cllr Ciaran Brogan told delegates that over the past number of years the Council had made tourism one of their main priorities and they were currently spending over €½ million marketing the county while a lot of work had gone into the development

of projects such as Sliabh Liag, Fanad Lighthouse and Malin Head. "I think it's fair to say that in Donegal we have the best product development than anywhere else in the whole country. Chief Executive Seamus Neely congratulated the industry for embracing the Wild Atlantic Way in such a short period of time and making the considerable effort to develop new networks that would help reach more customers, maximize the potential on their online digital platforms and showcase what their businesses has to offer. He said a key part of the conference was to update and improve

marketing techniques and he knew from feedback from last year's event that web-marketing and web-booking potential had improved because its potential had been highlighted. He believes the Wild Atlantic Way holds great opportunities for Donegal and that we are really only beginning to see the first benefits of it and that there are multiples more by way of traffic, visitors and revenue spent.

"How we collectively tap into that will determine how much of that potential we will actually realize. My own view is Donegal is the 'wild' part of the Wild Atlantic Way – it's rugged, it's beautiful, it's vast, it has lovely communities, it has fabulous landscapes, it has the lot" he said. – See more at: <http://www.donegalcoco.ie/yourcouncil/communication>

For more information please contact the EU unit at : 0749153900.



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund
Investing in your future



Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

Interreg V Environment Workshop

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) managing authority for Interreg VA held an Environment thematic workshop on the 27th October 2015 in the Crowne Plaza, Dundalk to assist potential applicants. Lorraine McCourt, Director of SEUPB gave an overview of the Programme and Priority, departmental input was given by Owen Lyttle, DOE and Ciaran O'Keefe NPWS, Paul Boylan, SEUPB Programme Manager provided details on the application, appraisal and project management and the workshop ended with a number of themed discussions covering budgets, projects delivery structures and results/ outputs. Donegal County Council are partnering on projects under Environment; Objective 2.1 Recovery of protected habitats and priority species and Objective 2.4 Improve freshwater quality in cross-border river basins. A video of the workshop along with the presentations can be accessed on the SEUPB website www.seupb.eu

Donegal County Council EU unit welcomed the invitation to meet with SEAI representatives from the Emerging technology division in Dublin on 4th November. The meeting provided the opportunity to open the discussion and inform SEAI of the progress of Project TIDAL. This project passed the Stage 1 bid process of the North West Europe Interreg VB programme in July 2015 and since then has been the subject of detailed and ongoing collaborative talks.

SEAI provided feedback and advice on how to proceed with the project concept and also offered information on existing support mechanisms available by way of existing funding programmes. SEAI clearly demonstrated a desire to support both in an advisory and financial means of such an initiative in Donegal and see great potential for the roll out nationally should such a model develop for tidal energy exploitation.

For more information please contact rkelly@donegalcoco.ie

POLICY WORK

Submission to the LEADER plan 2015

The EU Unit was requested to prepare a submission for the new Local Development Strategy for the LEADER programme. The submission outlined that Donegal County Council has extensive experience in participating in and managing EU projects. Donegal County Council, through its EU Policy and Funding Unit and the Community and Enterprise Section has a wealth of experience in the planning and implementation of a large number of projects, as funded through a wide variety of funding sources including the Peace Programme, INTERREG and various Transnational programmes. The submission profiled a selection of

the projects that the Council has either been a lead partner or a partner in recent years including:

- **Freshwater Pearl Mussel Practical Measures Implementation Project (INTERREG IVA)**
- **Inch & Foyle Wildfowl Reserve (INTERREG IVA)**
- **Ren Net (INTERREG IVA)**
- **Termon Project (PEACE III)**
- **Hands of History (PEACE III)**
- **Energy Awareness & Public Consultation (SEAI, Energy Research, Development & Demonstration (RD&D) Programme)**

The EU Unit during 2014 & 2015 has continued to successfully expand its activities and to explore opportunities presented by the regions eligibility to

compete in National and European funding programmes. The Unit has and will continue to actively explore the opening bids of the 2014-2020 INTERREG and other transnational suites of programmes to develop projects that align with the long term objectives and priorities of the organisation. The ability to maximise and attract external funding to the county and wider region will be key in supporting and in realising the Council's four directorate's medium and long term objectives and ambitions as set out in the Councils Corporate Plan and Local Economic and Community Plan.

'For more information please contact the EU unit at: 0749153900.

Interreg VA update - North West Regional Development meeting

Mr. Liam Ward, Director of Service, Community, Enterprise and Planning, was recently invited to present the work currently ongoing by the EU Unit and the wider Council in relation to the new round of INTERREG VA cross border funding at a meeting of the North West Regional Development Group.

The presentation focused on the planning process that the council has in place to target INTERREG VA funding for the county. Projects are targeting the Research and Innovation, Environment and Sustainable Transport measures. Mr. Ward highlighted the Council's success during the previous INTERREG IVA funding period where Donegal County Council was a partner in 15 projects that received over €25million in funding.

The presentation also included information on a number of bids for the current programme, including the River Restoration Project currently being prepared by the Water and Environment section of Donegal County Council in conjunction with the EU Unit and other cross border partners.

Presentation of AtlanTIC report to the Killybegs stakeholder group

At the most recent Killybegs stakeholder meeting held on 12th November Ms Elizabeth Muldowney of 'The Rural policy Hub' consultants delivered a presentation on her final piece of work for the council titled 'AtlanTIC' which was a follow on to her previous work on the development of Killybegs as a centre of Marine excellence in Tourism, Renewable energy & Food product development.

The AtlanTIC report was carried out as desktop research and focused on the single element of renewable energy narrowed down to existing energy research and innovation centres in

Ireland and the UK as a means of assessment and information in the development of the Killybegs LYIT campus.

Dundee University, namely, the Dundee University Centre for Renewable Energy (DUCRE), the Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mining Law and Policy (CEPMLP) and the Centre for Environmental Change and Human Resilience (CECHR) emerged as leaders in this area and that a lot can be learnt from this model. The report produced by Ms Muldowney concludes that LYIT's AtlanTIC ' (Atlantic trade & Innovation centre) on their Killybegs campus will

bring enormous benefits to the country as a whole and will have the potential to position the region and country as a leader in ocean energy and the 'blue economy' as a whole. The report was delivered to the existing Killybegs stakeholders group which currently comprises of Donegal County Council, Letterkenny Institute of technology and Bord Iascaigh Mhara. This group came together approximately 2-3 years ago to further develop the common vision for Killybegs and the region. For more information please contact rkelly@donegalcoco.ie

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

Regions, EU Institutions and Policy-Making – Online Course

EU unit staff have just completed their online course or MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on EU regions, institutions and policy-making which explained how the EU institutions function, how they work together and how this impacts policies and activities at the regional and local level. The course was organised by the Committee of the Regions, the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives, and was aimed at those interested in the EU and its regional affairs, particularly for officials of regional and local administrations involved in EU affairs.

The role and impact of the regions in policy making is not well known and often underestimated in public debate, this course contributed to the capacity-building of the regional and local authorities.

More than 50 politicians and experts from other EU institutions, agencies, European associations and academic institutions contributed in the production of the course which lasted for eight weeks.

During the eight-week course participants focused on one specific theme each week and had the opportunity to evaluate their learning progress through weekly quizzes. Content was delivered in the form of educational videos, live web debates with experts, infographics, factsheets, and participants interacted via social media and provided questions for guest speakers during the online debates.

For further information contact: EU Unit Donegal County Council, 074 9153900.

Derry City & Strabane District Council European Funding Seminar

Donegal County Council's EU unit participated in a European Funding Seminar Hosted by Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Councillor Elisha McCallion. The event took place in the Guildhall on Friday November 20th. The purpose of this funding seminar was to provide knowledge of how to access available European funding streams.

Speakers at the seminar included MEPs Matt Carthy and Martina Anderson, Colette Fitzgerald from the European Commission Office in Belfast, John McCandless, SEUPB, Aidan Gough, Interrade Ireland, Richard Osterhus, Derry City & Strabane District Council, and Trevor Scanlon, Donegal County Council. Each guest described their roles, the work they are engaged in, the support and assistance they provide and how groups have benefitted from previous funded projects. Speakers outlined the 2014 – 2020 Interreg VA cross border programme and PeaceV, Inrereg VB programmes - Northern Periphery & Artic, Atlantic Area and North West Europe and identified the priorities of each programme, national contact points and expected calls for applications.



The seminar provided a unique opportunity for groups to meet and engage with the speakers to find out what might be available for them under the current funding stream.

Richard Osterhus, Derry City & Strabane District Council, John McCandless, SEUPB, Trevor Scanlon, Donegal County Council, MEPs Matt Carthy and Martina Anderson, Elisha McCallion, Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council, Colette Fitzgerald, European Commission Office.

EU Unit Presentation to SPC Meeting

The EU Unit was invited to present at the Community, Social and Culture Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) on 21st October 2015. This presentation outlined the role and function of the Unit and committee members were advised of the project applications either currently being explored or prepared. The presentation provided updates on the three core areas of work within the EU unit – external funding, networks and partnership; and policy work.

The October 2015 edition of the EU Unit Bulletin was distributed at the end of the presentation and members expressed great interest in the work being undertaken by the EU Unit all of which was highlighted in the presentation and Bulletin.

It was noted at the meeting that the EU Unit will remain as a standing item on the agendas for all future SPC meetings and that a quarterly progress report will be prepared for these meetings.

EU Unit Contact Details

EU & Strategic
Policy Unit Manager -

Maria Ferguson

email:
maria.ferguson@donegalcoco.ie
ph: +353 (0) 74 9153900

EU Unit
Funding Officer -

Roisin Kelly

email:
rkelly@donegalcoco.ie
ph: +353 (0) 74 9153900

EU Unit Funding
Assistant

Trevor Scanlon

email:
trevor.scanlon@donegalcoco.ie
ph: +353 (0) 74 9153900

EU Unit
Intern -

Maire NíFhearraigh

email:
maire.nifhearraigh@donegalcoco.ie
ph: +353 (0) 74 9153900

European
Policy Officer -

Roisin McBride

email:
rmbcride@donegalcoco.ie
ph: +353 (0) 74 9153900